

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 01751 121301Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 SY-05 /088 W

-----121304Z 035964 /43

R 121025Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7303

INFO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 1751

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT SF

SUBJECT: DEATH IN DETENTION INQUEST: FRANK MAPETHLA MOHAPI

REF: PRETORIA 5791 (NOTAL)

1. ATTORNEY GRIFFITHS MXENGE OF DURBAN AND ADVOCATE
W. E. COOPER OF CAPE TOWN DISCUSSED DEVELOPMENTS IN MOHAPI
INQUEST WITH EMBOFF ON APRIL 6. FRANK MAPETHLA MOHAPI,
29, WAS DETAINED UNDER SECTION 6 OF THE TERRORISM ACT ON
JULY 15 IN EAST LONDON AND ALLEGEDLY HANGED HIMSELF BY
TWO PAIRS OF DENIM JEANS ON AUGUST 5, 1976 IN KING WILLIAM'S
TOWN (KWT). INQUEST BEGAN JANUARY 17 FOLLOWING RELEASE
OF DETAINED DOCTORS WHO ATTENDED POSTMORTEM.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 01751 121301Z

2. DURING JANUARY PROCEEDINGS, DR. R.B. HAWKES SAID
DEATH RESULTED FROM FORCE APPLIED TO NECK. HAWKES
SAID HIS FINDING IS CONSISTENT WITH DEATH BY EITHER
HANGING OR USE OF CLOTH OTHER THAN JEANS. STATE
PRODUCED SUICIDE NOTE ADDRESSED TO ONE OF MOHAPI'S
INTERROGATORS, CAPT. P. S. SCHOEMAN. PORTION OF NOTE

SAID "YOU CAN CARRY ON INTERROGATING MY DEAD BODY."

3. WHEN INQUEST RESUMED IN MARCH, COOPER SUBMITTED STATEMENTS FROM MOHAPI AND TWO OTHER DETAINEES ALLEGING BRUTALITY BY POLICE DURING INTERROGATION. MISS THENJIWE MTINTSO, FORMER DAILY DESPATCH REPORTER, NOW BANNED, TOLD MAGISTRATE SHE WAS REPEATEDLY ASSAULTED AND GIVEN "TOWEL TREATMENT". (NOTE: THIS IS WHEN A WET TOWEL IS PLACED AROUND THE HEAD, THE ENDS ARE WRAPPED AROUND THE NECK AND PULLED TO SUFFOCATE SUBJECT.) MTINTSO CLAIMED HER INTERROGATOR TOLD HER, "NOW YOU SEE HOW MAPETLA DIED." ACCORDING TO MXENGE, STATE SUBJECTED MTINTSO TO LENGTHY AND DETAILED CROSS-EXAMINATION BUT FAILED TO SHAKE HER TESTIMONY. PRIOR TO COURT POST-PONEMENT OF INQUEST UNTIL SEPTEMBER 19, MRS. MOHAPI TOLD MAGISTRATE THAT ALLEGED SUICIDE NOTE WAS NOT WRITTEN BY HER HUSBAND. MOHAPI'S TESTIMONY CONTRADICTED STATE PRODUCED HAND-WRITING EXPERT SGT. K. LANDMAN WHO TESTIFIED THAT MOHAPU WROTE NOTE.

4. MXENGE IS CERTAIN NOTE IS FORGERY AND TOLD EMBOFF THAT MOHAPI WAS PASSING NOTES TO WIFE DURING HIS DETENTION AND GAVE NO INDICATION THAT HE MIGHT COMMIT SUICIDE. MXENGE FEELS POLICE GOT IDEA TO CREATE SUCIDE NOTE WHEN ASKED BY FAMILY IMMEDIATELY AFTER LEARNING OF DEATH IF MESSAGE WAS LEFT BEHIND. MXENGE POINTED OUT THAT THERE ARE NO INDEPENDENT HAND-WRITING EXPERTS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND HE IS TRYING TO CONTACT A WASHINGTON ATTORNEY TO SEND ONE FROM THE US.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 01751 121301Z

MATTER OF US EXPERT IS URGENT BECAUSE KWT MAGISTRATE TELEPHONED COOPER APRIL 5 TO DISCUSS ADVANCING DATE FOR RESUMPTION OF INQUEST.

5. COMMENT: MEMBERS OF LOCAL BLACK COMMUNITY NATURALLY SUSPECT MOHAPI DIED OF MISTREATMENT AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY HANGED BY POLICE. UNLIKE SIMILAR CASES, HOWEVER, LEGAL COUNSEL FEELS POLICE VERSION OF CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT BE SUCCESSFULLY CHALLENGED AND ADDITIONAL LEGAL ACTION FOLLOW IF NOTE CAN BE ESTABLISHED AS FORGERY.BOWDLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, DEATHS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PRETOR01751
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770126-0690
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770466/aaaaceyu.tel
Line Count: 108
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6040bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PRETORIA 5791
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2832257
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEATH IN DETENTION INQUEST: FRANK MAPETHLA MOHAPI
TAGS: PINT, SF, (MOHAPI, FRANK MAPETHLA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6040bda6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009